



## **DCoC/JA NFPs Extraordinary Meeting on Red Sea Threats No 2**

**Virtual via Teams**

**Monday 15 January 2024**

### **Record of the Meeting**

1. The Signatory States of the Djibouti Code of Conduct and the Jeddah Amendment (hereinafter referred to as the DCoC/JA) and States eligible to sign these instruments (hereinafter referred to collectively as 'Participants') through the National Focal Points (NFPs) met the Secretary General of IMO to discuss the increasing threats to international shipping in the Red Sea area. The meeting was held via TEAMS on Monday, 15 January 2024.

2. The meeting was attended by participants from the following Signatory States:

<b>COMOROS</b>	<b>DJIBOUTI</b>	<b>EGYPT</b>	<b>ERITREA</b>
<b>ETHIOPIA</b>	<b>KENYA</b>	<b>JORDAN</b>	<b>MADAGASCAR</b>
<b>MALDIVES</b>	<b>MAURITIUS</b>	<b>MOZAMBIQUE</b>	<b>OMAN</b>
<b>SEYCHELLES</b>	<b>SOMALIA</b>	<b>SOUTH AFRICA</b>	<b>SUDAN</b>
<b>TANZANIA</b>	<b>UAE</b>	<b>YEMEN</b>	

And representatives from the IMO, IOC, RMIFC and RCOC.

The full list of participants is attached as **Annex A**.

### **Aim**

3. The aim of the meeting was to discuss the increased threats against international shipping in the Red Sea area and explore how the DCoC can address these threats through cooperation and information sharing, aligning with the objectives of the Jeddah Amendment.

### **SG's remarks and purpose of the meeting Mr. Arsenio Dominguez**

4. The Secretary-General began by highlighting the role that the DCoC played at the height of piracy and the subsequent expansion of its mandate to include other threats to maritime, as captured in the Jeddah Amendment. He noted that the purpose of the meeting is to emphasize the role the IMO will undertake and to explore collaboration with other partners in areas where Signatory States may require assistance beyond the IMO's mandate. The Secretary-General (SG) emphasized that the IMO's main area of concern in the ongoing Red Sea Crisis is as follows:

- .1 The safety of seafarers who should not be victims of a conflict.
- .2 The freedom and safety of navigation and free flow of shipping
- .3 Role that IMO can play in deescalating the crisis and bringing stakeholders together in pursuing a workable solution.

5. He noted that he seeks to understand how the Signatory States can further support the ongoing crisis and what activities can be undertaken to complement the actions that have been taken at the international level in support of the Red Sea crisis.

6. The SG encouraged the Signatory States to implement the guidelines developed by IMO to assist in de-escalating the crisis and urged their active involvement of the shipping industry, recognizing its crucial role as a key stakeholder in finding solutions to the on going situation. Additionally, he emphasized the importance of the participation of member States in supporting the DCoC Trust Fund to ensure the programme continues to benefit the region. Furthermore, he called upon the states to address aspects related to maintaining global trade without interference. In conclusion, he expressed anticipation of hearing from the Signatory States about the actions they can take and welcomed recommendations from the DCoC for IMO to consider moving forward.

#### **DCoC Steering Committee's Chair's remarks on behalf of DCoC Signatory States Mr. Metse Ralephenya**

7. Republic of South Africa and the Chair of the DCoC Steering Committee (Mr. Metse Ralephenya) began by thanking the SG for his support and commitment, including recently in his remarks at the United Nations Security Council. He noted that DCoC is well placed to address the current safety of navigation challenges including calling for a United Nations Security Council Resolution on the same which they recommended in the last meeting held on 18 December 2023. He noted that the opportunistic incidents of piracy are a clear indication that the root causes of threats still exist hence the need for the DCoC to step up efforts now to build regional coast guard capabilities and implement the information sharing network mechanisms.

8. He noted that the DCoC is firmly committed to the matter, emphasizing that it's an opportune time to build upon the work accomplished thus far. The immediate focus of the DCoC is on tangible outcomes. The areas where the DCoC is best positioned include building regional capacity to counter piracy and other threats to the safety and security of navigation, as well as supporting the ongoing efforts led by DCoC Working Group One on information sharing and Working Group Two on capacity-building coordination. He acknowledged that many current challenges in the Red Sea require air defense capabilities, which some DCoC Signatory States possess, while most do not. Additionally, there is a significant surface threat to merchant shipping. He highlighted that the DCoC can add value in the following ways:

Information sharing, especially for the enhancement of Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA), is critical. Sharing this information with various partners, through the DCoC Information Sharing Network (ISN), and developing the multi-agency National Maritime Information Sharing Centres (NMISCs) with linkages to the Regional Centres, is key. The coordination of capacity building and the expanded scope of Working Group 2 serve as effective tools,

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Centres, is key. The coordination of capacity building and the expanded scope of Working Group 2 serve as effective tools,

.2 Actual patrolling and looking after individual water spaces; enhancement of coast guard capabilities,

.3 Recognizing the threat will spread the need for greater security in ports and raising our own MDA and ISPS Code implementation,

.4 Specifically targeted projects building on national capacities for Yemen and Somalia police forces, and,

.5 Cutting off weapon supply to the perpetrators.

9. He emphasized that the confirmed cases of piracy are opportunistic in nature, and Somalia is on high alert, maintaining control of its waters to prevent a resurgence of piracy. However, there is a need for further development of Somali maritime law enforcement capabilities, and this should be supported.

### **Information Exchange and further collaborations utilising the DCoC Framework All participants**

10. Seychelles (Capt. Daniel Adam) noted in his statement, as the Chair of Working Group Two and the national focal point for Seychelles, that his follow-up comments focus on the region's defence capabilities and the imperative need to strengthen coastguard capabilities. He highlighted that Signatory States face a critical situation in the Red Sea, where drone and missile attacks have become prevalent. Effectively countering this threat requires Signatory States to enhance their air defence capabilities. In this context, DCoC countries with air capabilities may be called upon for assistance, and DCoC may seek support from international partners through the DCoC Framework.

11. He further noted that following the last High-Level Meeting (HLM), the DCoC is collaborating with the RMIFC and RCOG to ensure information sharing. To prevent the escalation of this situation beyond the Red Sea, Signatory States must maintain a high state of alert and take control of their waters. It is strongly advised that Coast Guards and Naval forces leverage the DCoC mechanisms for information sharing and coordinated capacity building. This proactive approach ensures preparedness, prevents any surprises, and enables effective control of their respective waters.

12. Yemen (Capt. Yeslem Mubark), as the Chair of Working Group One on Information Sharing and the national focal point for Yemen, noted his intention to address the issue of cutting off weapons supply to the perpetrators. He began by referencing the UN Security Council Resolution 2216 (2015), which outlines that Member States should take the necessary measures to prevent the direct or indirect supply, sale, or transfer of weapons for the benefit of Houthis. Therefore, in order to cut off the supply of weapon, there was need to work on: -

Enhancing the capability of Yemen Coast Guard in order to control the whole Yemeni Coastline by providing:

.1 Patrol boats.

.2 Communication and Surveillance Equipment.

.3 Capacity Building for Coast Guard and Maritime Administration (MAA) especially in the International Ship and Port Facility Code (ISPS Code).

.4 Supply the necessary and essential Communication equipment for the ReMISC. Operationalizing the Regional Maritime Information Sharing Centre

(ReMISC) relaunched last year in Aden will make it better placed to share information.

- .5 Strengthen the United Nation Verification and Inspection Mechanism (UNVIM) program to ensure effectiveness.
- .6 Effective information among DCO countries.

He emphasized the significance of the DCoC structure, specifically the multi-agency National Maritime Security Committees, in this context. These committees facilitate coordination among agencies and determine leadership responsibilities during specific periods.

13. Given the customs nature of this issue, where customs authorities must lead in border control measures, there is an imperative to strengthen the capabilities of customs and immigration for detecting weapons and outlining appropriate actions upon identification. Furthermore, he highlighted the crucial need to enhance the potential for intercepting fishing vessels to support fisheries protection, acknowledging the risk of these vessels being exploited for weapons smuggling.

14. He further emphasized that to comprehensively bolster maritime security, it is essential to increase the utilization of the DCoC mechanism for information sharing. This can be achieved by optimizing the established multi-agency National Maritime Information Sharing Centres, serving as the foundational platform for MDA. The result will be more targeted responses derived from a thorough analysis of the shared information.

15. Additionally, he highlighted that DCoC Signatory States need to implement measures agreed upon at the last DCoC high-level meeting to utilize the provisions of the Jeddah Amendment for facilitating coordination of operations at sea against illicit activities, leading to a legal finish. This is one of the reasons why the Regional Centre for Operational Coordination (RCOC) and Regional Maritime Information Fusion Centre Madagascar (RMIFC) were utilised as part of the DCoC Information Sharing Network.

16. He concluded by noting that Yemen also calls for support for the Yemeni Government in operationalizing the Regional Maritime Information Sharing Centre (ReMISC) relaunched last year in Aden, to be better placed to share information.

17. Capt. Getinet Abay (Ethiopia) noted that the Red Sea crisis occurred as the international community shifted its focus from piracy in the region to other areas, such as the conflict between Ukraine and Russia. He highlighted that, the DCoC has emerged as a leading organization for solutions in the area, coordinating partners and effectively sharing information. In this context, the Red Sea project, funded by the EU and implemented by the IMO and other UN agencies, has played a vital role in enhancing capacity. Simultaneously, the EU-funded IORIS platform has become an important tool for monitoring activities in the region. Ambassador Abay emphasized that the DCoC believes the current crisis can be addressed through cooperation with the IMO-led DCoC and its friends.

18. Against this background, he stressed the imperative to emphasize the urgency for enhancing both the Port Security and Red Sea Projects. This enhancement aims to fortify port capabilities, ultimately resulting in the heightened implementation of the ISPS Code. Such measures are vital for ensuring the security of ships and ports, effectively safeguarding against a spectrum of challenges and threats.

19. Mr. Yonis Adan (Somalia) affirmed and reassured participants in the meeting that, incidents of piracy off the Coast are opportunistic in nature. He noted that their maritime law enforcement authorities are actively overseeing the waters to address and manage such

occurrences. He noted that Somalia is grateful for the technical assistance received from the Red Sea Project and looks forward to receiving more support on the implementation of the IMO model on the Whole of Government approach to maritime security and need to develop the capacity of the maritime law enforcement agencies.

### **Plenary/Open Discussion**

20. Mr. Anandrao Huree, Deputy High Commissioner from the Mauritius High Commission in London expressed appreciation to the SG for this initiative. The Mauritius representative emphasized the importance of information sharing, capacity building, and collaboration with international partners to find a lasting solution to the crisis. Mentioning the desire to witness continued cooperation between RMIFC and RCOC, he confirmed that Mauritius looks forward to working together with IMO and DCoC to find solutions to the current challenges.

21. Yemen (Deputy Minister - Capt. Ali Subhi) appreciated the IMO's SG and noted that they followed his remarks at the United Nations Security Council wherein he raised the work done by the Signatory States since the Red Sea crisis arose. He noted the United Nations Security Council Resolution 2722 (2024) noted the need to support Yemen in implementing the Resolution 2216 including supporting the Yemeni Coast Guard to enable them have control over their waters among others and requested IMO for technical assistance on this matter of support to the Yemeni Coast Guard and operationalization of the Regional Maritime Information Sharing Centre.

22. Djibouti (Mr. Ali Mirah) began by expressing appreciation to the SG for taking the initiative to support the DCoC in the ongoing crisis. He emphasized the need to reinforce the capacity-building aspect and coordination of the DCoC. He requested the IMO to take the lead and support the work of the DCoC, given that the Trust Fund currently lacks funds. This support is crucial to ensure that the gains made are not lost and the mission of the Jeddah Amendment is achieved.

23. Mr. Mirah appreciated the work of the IMO through the Red Sea project and expressed hope that the technical assistance received from the programme will contribute to building the region's capacity. He reiterated the importance of support towards Yemen, emphasizing that stability in that region is crucial for eliminating the threat in the entire area.

24. The IMO Secretary General noted in conclusion that;

- .1 IMO will continue to condemn the attacks in the red sea,
- .2 IMO will continue to work with United Nations and partners to avert the crisis in the region,
- .3 IMO has noted the need from the Signatory States to enhance coast guard capabilities and information sharing mechanisms and to do this he tasked the Signatory States to develop an action plan with tangible results on how this can be achieved which he assured the Signatory States he will use as a document as a foundation to seek for support and buy in from other international partners in areas outside IMO's remit and ability.
- .4 The Signatory States need to review the implementation of the IMO guides on countering piracy at national level so that they are up to date and are alert to avert any further interference to the maritime security architecture.
- .5 The Signatory States need to be proactive and vocal about the crisis so that their voice can be heard in the various international engagements taking place

on the matter. He encouraged the Signatory States to also involve the maritime and shipping community who are also key stakeholders in this sector and can assist in finding and implementing a lasting solution to the crisis.

- .6 He appreciated the work that the Signatory States have undertaken and requested them to share the same with IMO for them to take note and work together in enhancing maritime security in the region.

### Summary of Discussion and Way Forward

25. The following is a summary of the meeting outcomes:

- .1 Signatory States agreed to develop an action plan with tangible results including enhancing coast guard capabilities and information sharing enhancement share the same with the Secretary General who will consider the same to seek for further support from the international community.
- .2 Signatory States were encouraged to be more active and engage in the region including with the maritime and shipping community so that their voice is heard in the various engagements in the Red Sea agenda.
- .3 Yemen requested for technical assistance on developing capacity of its Yemeni Coast Guard and operationalization of the Regional Maritime Information Sharing Centre to assist in information sharing.

### Vote of thanks:

26. The Secretary-General appreciated the Signatory States for their commitment and expressed anticipation for receiving the agreed-upon action plan. He reiterated continued support for the work of the DCoC and promised to make time to attend some of their future meetings, not only in relation to the Red Sea Crisis but also concerning other DCoC agenda items.

27. With no further business to discuss, the meeting concluded at 1716 hours EAT.

### Annexes:

- **Annex A- List of Participants**

Country/Organization	Name
Comoros	Anfifdine Ali Tohir
	Said Lavani
Djibouti	Mr. Ali Miirah Chelem
Ethiopia	Captain Getinet Abay Gebru
	Firaol Tafa
Jordan	Eng Abed Almuez
Kenya	Bruno Shioso
	Lawrence Mwenda
	Julius Segera
Madagascar	Captain (Navy) Randrianantenaina
Maldives	Capt. Adhil Rasheed
Mauritius	Capt. Asiva Coopen

<b>Mozambique</b>	Armando Alvaro Mulaleia
<b>Oman</b>	Eng. Mohammed Said Al-Zidi
<b>Kingdom of Saudi Arabia</b>	Com. Hassan Al-Asmari
<b>Seychelles</b>	Captain Daniel Adam
	Capt. Gerald Wong-Pool
<b>Sudan</b>	Captain Islam Babiker Abu Daraq
<b>Somalia</b>	Yonis Adan Yonis
<b>South Africa</b>	Mthunzi Madiya
	Metse Ralephenya
	Mashudu Nepfumbada
	Boetse Ramahlo
	Tshepo Motloutsi
<b>United Republic of Tanzania</b>	Stella Joshua Katondo
	Lt. Cdr. M. Mwinyi
	Juma Daudi
<b>United Arab Emirates</b>	Capt. Jaber Saif AL Shehhi
<b>Yemen</b>	Capt. Yeslem Mubarak
	Mohammed Al Magashi
	Capt. Ali Alsubhi
<b>RCOC</b>	Sam Gontier
<b>RMIFC</b>	Alex Ralanairavony
<b>Indian Ocean Commission</b>	Raj Mohabeer
<b>The Embassy of Egypt in London, UK</b>	Akram Elgendi
<b>The Embassy of the State Eritrea in London, UK</b>	Yohanna P. Teklu
<b>The Embassy of Madagascar in London, UK</b>	Anandrao Huree
	Tojonirina Ramarolahy
<b>The Embassy of the Republic of Yemen in London, UK</b>	Badr. S Mohasen
<b>The Embassy of the Sultanate of Oman in London, UK</b>	Mansoor
<b>The Permanent Representative of UAE to IMO</b>	Mohamed Alkaabi
<b>IMO</b>	Secretary General Arsenio Dominguez
<b>IMO</b>	Litiana Rasigatale
<b>IMO</b>	Hiroyuki Yamada
<b>IMO</b>	Damien Chavelier
<b>IMO</b>	Gisela Vieira
<b>IMO</b>	Kiruja Micheni
<b>IMO</b>	Mara Luciano
<b>IMO</b>	Natasha Brown
<b>IMO</b>	Winnie Wariara Maina

<b>IMO</b>	Esther Wanjiru Kungu (Njonde)
<b>IMO</b>	Mustafa Ameen Abdulqader
<b>ILO France</b>	ILO France